

Amendments to the Claims

This listing of claims replaces all prior versions and listings of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims:

1. (Cancelled)

2. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 60 wherein determining the online context of the user comprises determining an Internet domain currently accessed by the user, and determining the online context of the other users comprises determining Internet domains currently accessed by the other users.

3. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 60 wherein determining the online context of the user comprises determining a newsgroup currently accessed by the user, and determining the online context of the other users comprises determining newsgroups currently accessed by the other users.

4. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 60 wherein determining the online context of the user comprises determining a message board currently accessed by the user, and determining the online context of the other users comprises determining message boards currently accessed by the other users.

5. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 60 wherein determining the online context of the user comprises determining a URL currently accessed by the user, and determining the

online context of the other users comprises determining URLs currently accessed by the other users.

6. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 60 wherein determining the online context of the user comprises determining an online context on which the user presently is focused, and determining the online context of the other users comprises determining online contexts on which the other users presently are focused.

7. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 60 wherein identifying the group of the other users sharing the online context of the user and the at least one trait with the user comprises identifying other users who enter the online context of the user and users who leave the online context of the user.

8. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 60 wherein the trait information comprises information related to an age of the user or of an other user.

9. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 60 wherein the trait information comprises information related to a demographic identifier of the user or of an other user.

10. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 60 wherein the trait information comprises information related to an expertise rating of the user or of an other user.

11. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 60 wherein the trait information comprises information related to an interest of the user or of an other user.

12. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 60 wherein the trait information comprises information related to a participation status of the user or of an other user.

13. (Original) The method of claim 12 wherein the information related to the participation status comprises a visibility preference of the user or of the other user.

14. (Original) The method of claim 12 wherein the information related to the participation status comprises information defining the participation status of the user or of the other user based on multiple online contexts.

15. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 60 wherein the trait information comprises trait information of an individual selected as an associate by the user or by an other user.

16. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 60 wherein the trait information comprises information related to an online status of the user or of an other user.

17. (Original) The method of claim 16 wherein the online status comprises a status of active, idle, away, and/or mobile.

18. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 60 further comprising:
storing other information related to the online context of the user; and
storing other information related to the online context of the other users, ~~and~~
wherein causing presentation, to the user, of [[an]] the indicator that identifies the at least
one user as a member of the group of other users comprises causing presentation, to the user, of

the indicator that identifies the at least one user as a member of the group of other users based on the stored other information.

19. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 18 wherein the other information comprises information indicative of an identification of the user or of the other users.

20. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 19 wherein the information indicative of an identification comprises an online identifier associated with the user or with the other users.

21. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 18 wherein the other information comprises contact information of the user or of the other users.

22-37. (Cancelled)

38. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 60 further comprising enabling the user to communicate with the at least one user identified as a member of the ~~subgroup~~ group of the other users.

39. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 38 wherein enabling the user to communicate with the at least one user identified as a member of the ~~subgroup~~ group of the other users comprises enabling the user to send an instant message to the at least one user identified as a member of the ~~subgroup~~ group of the other users.

40. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 38 wherein enabling the user to communicate with the at least one user identified as a member of the ~~subgroup~~ group of the other

users comprises enabling the user to send an email to the at least one user identified as a member of the ~~subgroup~~ group of the other users.

41. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 38 wherein enabling the user to communicate with the at least one user identified as a member of the ~~subgroup~~ group of the other users comprises enabling the user to contact directly the ~~[[the]]~~ at least one user identified as a member of the ~~subgroup~~ group of the other users using a voice communication.

42. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 41 wherein the voice communication employs a mobile device.

43. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 38 wherein enabling the user to communicate with the at least one user identified as a member of the ~~subgroup~~ group of the other users comprises enabling the user to store contact information of the at least one user identified as a member of the ~~subgroup~~ group of the other users to a contact list of the user.

44. (Original) The method of claim 43 wherein the contact list of the user comprises a buddy list.

45-59. (Cancelled)

60. (Currently Amended) A method of informing a user of other network users, the method comprising:

determining an online context of a user, the online context being one or more of a web site currently accessed by the user, an Internet domain currently accessed by the user, a

newsgroup currently accessed by the user, a message board currently accessed by the user, or a URL currently accessed by the user;

determining an online context of other users;

~~identifying a group of the other users sharing the online context of the user, the number of users in the group of the other users being less than the number of the other users;~~

storing trait information for the user;

storing trait information for ~~each of the other users in the group of the other users;~~

comparing the online context of the user to the online context of the other users and the
stored trait information for the user to the stored trait information for ~~each of the other users in the group of the other users;~~

based on the comparison, identifying a ~~subgroup of the group~~ of the other users sharing the online context of the user and at least one trait with the user, the number of users in the group of the other users being less than the number of the other users; and

causing presentation, to the user, of an indicator that identifies at least one user as a member of the ~~subgroup~~ group of the other users sharing the online context of the user and the at least one trait with the user.

61. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 8 wherein comparing the stored trait information for the user to the stored trait information for ~~each of the other users in the group of the other users~~ comprises comparing information related to an age of the user to information related to an age of ~~each of the other users in the group of the other users.~~

62. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 9 wherein comparing the stored trait information for the user to the stored trait information for ~~each of the other users in the group of the other users~~ comprises comparing a demographic identifier of the user to a demographic identifier of ~~each of the other users in the group of the other users~~.

63. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 60 further comprising causing presentation, to the user, of the number of users in the group of the other users.

64. (Cancelled)

65. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 60 further comprising causing presentation, to the user, of the trait information of the at least one user in the ~~subgroup of the~~ group of the other users.

66. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 65 wherein the trait information of the at least one user in the ~~subgroup of the~~ group of the other users comprises an interest of the at least one user in the ~~subgroup of the~~ group of the other users.

67. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 65 wherein the trait information of the at least one user in the ~~subgroup of the~~ group of the other users comprises an interest of an individual selected as an associate by the at least one user in the ~~subgroup of the~~ group of the other users.

68. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 65 wherein the trait information of the at least one user in the ~~subgroup of the~~ group of the other users comprises an expertise of the at least one user in the ~~subgroup of the~~ group of the other users.

69. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 65 wherein causing presentation of the trait information of the at least one user in the ~~subgroup of the~~ group of the other users comprises causing presentation of the trait information of the at least one user in the ~~subgroup of the~~ group of the other users graphically.

70. (Cancelled)

71. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 60 wherein causing presentation of [[an]] the indicator that identifies the at least one user as a member of the ~~subgroup~~ group of the other users comprises causing presentation of an indicator that identifies at least one user as a member of the ~~subgroup~~ group of the other users, wherein the users in the ~~subgroup~~ group of the other users are sorted according to trait information.

72. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 60 wherein the trait information comprises information indicative of a location.

73. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 72 wherein comparing the stored trait information for the user to the stored trait information for ~~each of the other users in the group of~~ the other users comprises comparing information indicative of a location related to the user to information indicative of a location related to ~~the other users in the group of~~ the other users.

74. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 60 further comprising repeating the act of determining ~~[[an]]~~ the online context of the user, the act of determining ~~[[an]]~~ the online context of the other users, ~~the act of identifying a group of the other users sharing the online context of the user,~~ the act of storing trait information for the user, the act of storing trait information for ~~each of the other users in the group of the other users,~~ the act of comparing the online context of the user to the online context of the other users and the stored trait information for the user to the stored trait information for ~~each of the other users in the group of the other users,~~ the act of identifying ~~a subgroup of the group of the other users sharing~~ the online context of the user and the at least one trait with the user, and the act of causing presentation of ~~[[an]]~~ the indicator that identifies the at least one user as a member of the ~~subgroup group~~ group of the other users at a user designated interval.

75. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 60 further comprising repeating the act of determining ~~[[an]]~~ the online context of the user, the act of determining ~~[[an]]~~ the online context of the other users, ~~the act of identifying a group of the other users sharing the online context of the user,~~ the act of storing trait information for the user, the act of storing trait information for ~~each of the other users in the group of the other users,~~ the act of comparing the online context of the user to the online context of the other users and the stored trait information for the user to the stored trait information for ~~each of the other users in the group of the other users,~~ the act of identifying ~~a subgroup of the group of the other users sharing~~ the online context of the user and the at least one trait with the user, and the act of causing presentation of ~~[[an]]~~ the indicator that identifies the at least one user as a member of the ~~subgroup group~~ group of the other users at a system designated interval.

76. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 60 further comprising:

determining a changed online context of the user;

~~determining an online context of the other users;~~

~~identifying a group of the other users sharing the changed online context of the user, the number of users in the group of the other users being less than the number of the other users;~~

~~storing trait information for the user;~~

~~storing trait information for each of the other users in the group of the other users;~~

~~comparing the changed online context of the user to the online context of the other users~~

and the stored trait information for the user to the stored trait information for each of the other users in the group of the other users;

based on the comparison, identifying a subgroup of the group of the other users sharing the changed online context of the user and at least one trait with the user, the number of users in the group of the other users being less than the number of the other users; and

causing presentation, to the user, of an indicator that identifies at least one user as a member of the subgroup of the other users.

77. (Currently Amended) A system for informing a user of other network users, the

system comprising a processor connected to a storage device and one or more input/output devices, wherein the processor is configured to:

a context determination service configured to determine an online context of a user, the online context being a web site currently accessed, an Internet domain currently accessed, a newsgroup currently accessed, a message board currently accessed, or a URL currently accessed;

~~the context determination service configured to~~ determine an online context of other users;

~~an identification service configured to identify a group of the other users sharing the online context of the user, the number of users in the group of the other users being less than the number of the other users;~~

~~an information storage service configured to store trait information for the user in a users store~~ of the storage device;

~~the information storage service configured to store trait information for each of the other users in the group of the other users in the users store~~ of the storage device;

~~an informing service configured to compare~~ the online context of the user to the online context of the other users and the stored trait information for the user to the stored trait information for ~~each of the other users in the group of the other users;~~

~~the informing service configured to identify, based on the comparison, a subgroup of the group of the other users sharing~~ the online context of the user and at least one trait with the user, the number of users in the group of the other users being less than the number of the other users; and

~~the informing service configured to cause presentation, to the user, of an indicator that identifies at least one user as a member of the subgroup~~ group of the other users.

78. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 77, wherein the users store is migrated based on an activity level associated with the online context of the user.

79. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 77, wherein the users store is divided based on an activity level associated with the online context of the user.

80. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 77, wherein the users store is combined with a related users store based on an activity level associated with the online context of the user.

81. (Currently Amended) A tangible computer-readable medium storing a computer program configured to inform a user of other network users, the computer program comprising one or more code segments that, when executed, cause a computer to:

determine an online context of a user, the online context being a web site currently accessed, an Internet domain currently accessed, a newsgroup currently accessed, a message board currently accessed, or a URL currently accessed;

determine an online context of other users;

~~identify a group of the other users sharing the online context of the user, the number of users in the group of the other users being less than the number of the other users;~~

store trait information for the user;

store trait information for ~~each of the other users in the group of~~ the other users;

compare the online context of the user to the online context of the other users and the stored trait information for the user to the stored trait information for ~~each of the other users in the group of~~ the other users;

based on the comparison, identify a ~~subgroup of the group of~~ the other users sharing the online context of the user and at least one trait with the user, the number of users in the group of the other users being less than the number of the other users; and

cause presentation, to the user, of an indicator that identifies at least one user as a member of the ~~subgroup~~ group of the other users.

82. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 10 wherein comparing the stored trait information for the user to the stored trait information for ~~each of the other users in the group of~~ the other users comprises comparing an expertise rating of the user to an expertise rating of ~~each of the other users in the group of~~ the other users.

83. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 60 further comprising causing presentation, to the user, of an online identifier associated with the at least one user in the ~~subgroup~~ group of the other users.

84. (Currently Amended) A method of informing a user of other network users, the method comprising:

determining an online context of a first user;

determining an online context of a second user;

storing a buddy list for the first user;

determining that the online context of the second user matches the online context of the first user and that the second user is a member of the buddy list of the first user; and

~~storing a trait for the second user;~~

~~determining that the stored trait for the second user matches a reference trait;~~

based on the determination that ~~the stored trait for the second user matches the reference trait and the determination that~~ the online context of the second user matches the online context of the first user and that the second user is a member of the buddy list of the first user, causing

presentation, to the first user, of an identifier that identifies the second user as having the same online context of the first user.

85. (New) The method of claim 84 wherein the online context is a web site currently accessed, an Internet domain currently accessed, a newsgroup currently accessed, a message board currently accessed, or a URL currently accessed.

86. (New) The method of claim 60 wherein determining the online context of the user comprises determining a web site currently accessed by the user, and determining the online context of the other users comprises determining web sites currently accessed by the other users.

87. (New) The method of claim 60 wherein causing presentation of the indicator that identifies the at least one user as a member of the group of the other users sharing the online context of the user and the at least one trait with the user comprises visually distinguishing the at least one user as a member of the group of the other users sharing the online context of the user and the at least one trait with the user from other users who share the online context of the user but do not share the at least one trait with the user.

88. (New) The method of claim 60 wherein identifying the group of the other users sharing the online context of the user and at least one trait with the user comprises:

identifying a first group of the other users sharing the online context of the user, the number of users in the first group of the other users being less than the number of the other users; and

identifying a subgroup of the first group of the other users sharing at least one trait with the user, the number of users in the subgroup of the first group of the other users being less than the number users in the first group of the other users.

89. (New) A method of informing a user of other network users, the method comprising:

- determining an online context of a user;
- determining an online context of other users;
- storing trait information for the user;
- storing trait information for the other users;
- comparing the online context of the user to the online context of the other users and the stored trait information for the user to the stored trait information for the other users;

based on the comparison, identifying a group of the other users sharing the online context of the user and at least one trait with the user, the number of users in the group of the other users being less than the number of the other users;

causing presentation, to the user, of an indicator that identifies at least one user as a member of the group of the other users sharing the online context of the user and the at least one trait with the user; and

visually distinguishing the at least one user as a member of the group of the other users sharing the online context of the user and the at least one trait with the user from other users who share the online context of the user but do not share the at least one trait with the user.